DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 078 081 TM 002 900

AUTHOR	Bippus, Stanley L.; And Others
TITLE	Evaluation of Non-Traditional Instruction in Southeastern Alaska Indian School.
PUB DATE	Feb 73
NOTE	15p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (New Orleans, Louisiana, February 25-March 1, 1973)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*American Indians; *Curriculum Design; Independent Study; *Instructional Programs; Interviews; *Program Evaluation; Teacher Qualifications; *Teaching Techniques
IDENTIFIERS	*Alaska

ABSTRACT

The instructional program evaluation of a school which serves Haida and Tlinget Indians is reported. The school, located in southeastern Alaska, has a nontraditional program of mini-courses, supplemented by independent study and specific experiences in vocational areas. The evaluation was conducted at the end of the program's first year. The study is unique in that many of the teachers were community people without training in education. These people were assisted by a professional staff. Data were collected through students, using a social science mode of interviewing. The results of the evaluation were used in planning future mini-courses, independent study, and vocational programs for the community. (Author)

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

TM 002 900

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED 078081

EVALUATION OF NON-TRADITIONAL INSTRUCTION IN A SOUTHEASTERN ALASKA INDIAN SCHOOL

Stanley L. Bippus
Craig City Schools

Richard C. Kunkel
Saint Louis University

James H. McElhinney
Ball State University

A paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, Louisiana, February, 1973.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Community Description. 2

Current Program Description

Continuous Progress-Elementary Program. 2

High School Mini Course Program 3

Background of the Report 3

Data Collection. 4

Theory of Evaluation 4

Data From All School Meeting as Source of Evaluation Data 5

Data From Community Needs Assessment 7

General Findings and Recommendations 7

Progress From Evaluation 10

AN EVALUATION OF NON-TRADITIONAL INSTRUCTION IN AN ALASKAN SCHOOL

Community Description

The community of Craig is located on Prince of Wales Island in Southeast Alaska. It has a year round population of 350 people (50% Tlinget and Haida Indians, 50% Caucasian) but a summertime population of around 800. This seasonal rise is due to fishing, logging and construction activities.

Our climate is wet, over 2 fathoms of rain per year. The temperature is mild--60 degrees in the summer, 40 degrees in the winter.

The fishing industry is the hub of the local economy with employment ranging from egg house workers in the cannery to seine boat captains as well as jobs in supporting services. The logging industry is growing with the opening of a saw mill and logging activities moving from the east coast of Prince of Wales to the west coast.

Continuous Progress - Elementary Program

George Hamilton Elementary School has eliminated the traditional grades and instituted an open classroom policy where students K through 6 plan and participate in learning activities with advisor-specialists for the purpose of skill diagnosis and the planning of learning activities. Elementary grade levels have been replaced with a procedure of upward progress. The assignment of students to instructioned groups is based on knowledge about the individual students. At this time there are three controlled groups (peer grouped) and one independent group. (individuals who have demonstrated ability to have own learner area). The controlled groups move from one basic skills center to another at fixed times. In each area center the students individually schedule conferences with the Advisor-Specialists for the purpose of skill diagnosis and the planning of learning activities, carrying out learning activities, and test learnings. The independent group has a room of its own for study or relaxation. Each independent student meets with the advisor-specialist in each of the disciplines and plans individual or small group activity units, establishes cognative and affective goals for themselves, and sets up time lines for themselves within these units.

Additionally there are special interest activities scheduled throughout the day which all children can elect to take providing they are meeting their goals. An individual child can accomplish his tasks in any of the centers he chooses. There are additional specialized rooms (AV room, art room, music room, typing room, etc.) he may also use. Certain activities occur in homes and community establishments as best suited.

High School Mini Course Program

Prince of Wales High School basic scheduling block is the 3 week mini-course. The courses are very comprehensive and highly relevant to local needs. Students may now enroll in courses as varied as Criminology, Outdoor Survival, Candlemakeing, Writing for Jobs, Water Skiing, Heatcutting, Game Dressing and Jack London. These are courses that couldn't be offered as a semester course and couldn't be selected by students if they were just units.

Mini courses at Prince of Wales High School are taught by anyone with the skill or expertise to do the job. This ranges from a 90 year old grandfather and his successful halibut hook carving class to 2 students and their discussion class, "Alcohol-The All American Cop-Out." Teachers are selected from the staff (all of it from the Supt. to the Custodian) the community, the kids and, whoever's passing through.

Travel and Work Experience play a large part in the mini course system. Without the problem of damaging a whole semester, classes are scheduled for 1/2 days or even all day. A "class" in shrimp fishing might find a student 200 miles away aboard a shrimp boat for three weeks. Last year 17 students had a 6 week tour of Europe and were able to enroll simply in the next mini course on their return.

The grading system for the mini-courses is on a Honors/Pass/Incomplete basis. A pass/honors is worth 1/12 of 1 year's credit. Students are not failed and have all the time they wish to make up incompletes.

Scheduling is done 1 mini course at a time. While a year long syllabus is not available teachers have a general idea of what will be offered.

Background of the Report

In the spring of 1972, consultants were commissoned to conduct a process and product evaluation of the educational programs of Prince of Wales High School and Craig Elementary School in Craig, Alaska. When the schools began to develop their current operation the professional staff and the community expected that, in addition to the mastery of subject matter, education at these schools was to develop many other competencies in students. Primarily these purposes established were to:

1. Involve the pupils more directly in decision making;
2. Offer opportunities for the students to engage in problem-posing and problem-solving approaches to learning;
3. Enjoy school more than previously;
4. See more relevant purposes for their school program.

This report attempts to present ideas and findings from this early evaluation, give information from the community needs-assessment which was conducted by students of Prince of Wales High School in September, 1972, and present a tentative position about the progress and evaluation of programs.

Data Collection for Program Evaluation, Spring, 1972

Data Collection

Approximately half the pupils in the elementary and secondary schools were systematically interviewed as were all the teachers, teacher-aides and community mini-course teachers.

Persons interviewed had to construct their own response. This data collection method collected information in the words of the persons being interviewed. Reporting interview data required combining these responses which were similar but not identical. In this report the reader does not have access to the original statements of the person responding, but has access only to the summary. It was possible to interview all the professional employees but it was necessary to sample the student population.

Theory of Evaluation

In research designed to measure the impact of educational programs, one approach had been to determine what pupils judge is happening to them because they participate in the program. Principles of learning suggest that what a person perceives as important is important to him. One of the approaches of this evaluation is to attempt to determine what pupils think is happening to them.

Another research approach used in measuring school's effectiveness is to measure what teachers do that influences pupils. Evidence collected from this approach suggest that teacher personality, and interaction between teacher and pupil are of major significance. Therefore, the evaluation attempts to determine what teachers and other professional personnel do that has an impact on students.

In addition to exposure to organized knowledge, there are apparently many important experiences for pupils at school. A pupil learns to seek to avoid intellectual activities on the basis of whether he finds them rewarding and challenging or obsure and irrelevant. It is not the presence or absence of books, or gymnasiums or courses, or activities, but an individual pupil's personal experiences with them that is important. Teachers and other adults are present, and pupils have learning experiences with them. Research suggests that these experiences combine to provide the program's institutional impact.

In many cases this evaluation reports educational outcomes that have not developed from planned instruction but result from the unexamined behavior of teachers, administrators, and other pupils. The program is what is happening and sometimes what is not happening.

Data From All-School Meeting as Source of Evaluative Data

Working in the small group format, all secondary pupils were asked to address themselves to one of three major problems facing Prince of Wales High School. Questions were:

1. What to do with the students who do not identify and sustain their active involvement in classes?

2. How to make the basic courses more interesting?

3. How to make the students from the community of Klawock feel more a part of the school located in Craig?

Students were asked to brainstorm solutions to these. The following are a summary of their suggestions.

Students chose only to suggest resolutions to the first two issues. With reference to the problem of freedom and how to use it, some of the suggestions were:

1. To have a higher and lower grade recreation room so that students will not wander around the halls or walk the streets.

2. There's nothing wrong with freedom - that students should be allowed to work when they feel like it, thus their interest is higher.

3. Concern for the time and space used around the school for the "little children."

4. Another suggestion was a "break hour - for about 20 to 25 minutes like we had about two years ago." "it turned out well."

5. The free time should be supervised a little more closely.

6. Have a recreation room where pop and candy machines and juke box are available.

7. Make a requirement that students should stay in so many courses. At this time some students are really abusing it, but if it is certainly going to work it is going to take time.

8. We hope the administration is not too upset about it now.

9. You should take classes five hours a day - that is what school is for. You can have freedom after you get your high school diploma.

With reference to problems of the basic course not being as attractive as the electives, the following suggestions or comments were made:

1. Set up the program so you can't drop basics and you must maintain so many basics in a given time.

2. Keep being open minded and make the class as interesting as possible. Retain the good, open-minded teachers.

3. Basics should deal more with reality in our world today.

4. Social science and English teachers should try to make the basic classes interesting by going on trips.

5. We students must learn more responsibility. We think the lower high school students are having too much freedom and cannot decide wisely between electives and basics.

When the students were asked in small groups one thing that they heard their parents say positive about school, most frequently cited had to do with the new "set-up this year" that gave students a lot of opportunity for different kidds of experiences. The second most frequently cited had to do with the travel program, "students visiting other schools in other parts of the world," and the third most frequently cited had to do with the specific interests on the part of parents with good teachers at the school. Other topics cited were "kids get a lot of individual help in the elementary school, there is a variety of courses offered," and a high frequency of students indicated that their parents "liked school this year."

To identify that which their parents said most often they didn't like about school, out of the 30 ideas identified as negative, six specifically had to do with students being "observed out of school." However, ten percent of the students agreed that their parents never said anything negative about school. The third most frequent comment had to do with cleanliness around the building, lack of notice of coming events, or had to do with specific personal kind of family relationships.

Data From Community Needs Assessment

In September of 1972, 14 senior high school students interviewed parents and citizens of Craig and Klawock communities on Prince of Wales Island. A systematic community assessment was conducted by these 14 seniors. Nearly 80% of the adults living in the villages of Craig and Klawock were interviewed.

Various economic and social concerns on the island were identified through these interviews and this report contains some of the general findings and recommendations.

General Findings and Recommendations

1. The government and schools should be encouraged to bring about systematically some of the economic and recreational changes suggested in this summary.

2. The school should develop programs and direct experiences in community and political effectiveness for students.

3. The community should lead in finding more ways for students to be involved in political and leadership roles.

4. The opportunities for travel outside the Craig-Klawock area should be continued and extended, and emphasis placed on career training and career possibilities outside the area continued.

5. Efforts should be made to work at the problem of proprietary relations at Prince of Wales High School so that students can feel it is "their" high school.

6. Mini-courses and individualized programs in the elementary and secondary schools should be continued. Teachers should be encouraged to find new forms of instruction based on the skills and successes of previous years. The schools should continue the programs that have resulted in fine perception on the part of both communities with regard to vocational and industrial arts programs. Included in these programs should be fishing industries and opportunities for developing recreational facilities.

At the conclusion of the Spring, 1972, program evaluation the following judgments were prepared and presented regarding the educational program at the Prince of Wales school and the Craig Elementary School.

1. Prince of Wales High School and Craig Elementary School have an adequate pattern for achievement monitoring and standardized testing.

2. A warm family atmosphere exists beyond normal school expectations. Adults (administrators, teachers, aides, and parents) operate in such a familiar atmosphere that one is taken by the friendly inter-relationship of these people.

3. Evidence exists that many community people are aware of the efforts of the school and many thoroughly understand the program. Some people in the community have concern because of the visibility of freedom but these people seem to be waiting for the program to fully develop for benefit of all the children.

4. Seven out of every eight elementary pupils at the Craig School are satisfied or pleased with the program. All elementary teachers are pleased with the program while at the same time conscious of its limitations and to try better patterns for instruction.

5. 75% of the elementary pupils are so pleased that they would not support any change for next year.

6. The community oriented and practical skill approach to the mini-course idea is sound, worked effectively and should be continued.

7. Four out of the five pupils interviewed new to Prince of Wales High School saw the school as helpful to their adjustment. Only one of these five saw the school as hard to adjust to.

8. The elementary school interviews requested more gym activities and more involvement in the mini-course program.

9. The overall faculty is sound in educational philosophy, psychology and definitely child oriented, warm in their relationships and secure in their efforts, when compared to other schools.

10. Teacher aides are uniquely qualified, sensitive, perceptive and competent at a professional level.

11. The professional trust between adult and adult in the school as well as between parent-school is high and persuasive.

12. The mini-course program was effective for its first year and should result in an improved program next year. This is supported by data from teachers, mini-course community teachers, and students. The program needs to be administered a little more tightly, requirements need to be made more attractive to attract and hold. Electives need to continue in variety and attractiveness.

13. The travel program for this past year was outstanding. In terms of exchange programs the incoming students from any one location should be kept small (2 - 3 at most). The same size factor should be applied to Craig students elsewhere. The program should be continued and expanded.

14. Although the children are serving as the best public relations continued attempts should be made to attract adults into the school. Community taught mini-courses, adults evening programs are now doing this. These programs should be expanded to include more adults particularly those not now attracted by the regular operation. Consideration might be given to more community planning and community action groups for the betterment of life on Prince of Wales island.

15. Develop a monitoring personal counselor type program. A program wherein each child has a significant adult around school who knows him well and who can watch his personal, social and academic growth. This program should utilize teachers, teacher aides, administrators, and other school adults.

16. If finances allow a program should include students and parents in the in-service travel of teachers.

17. An effort should be extended to attract and maintain male teacher aides.

18. Develop and apply an on-going program evaluation model that uses standardized achievement data and perception data. A small committee of teachers, parents, and students should function year round, (creating, gather and analyzing data from the school and community).

19. Overwhelming evidence exists through the observations, interviews, and the group work that the school was functioning on a very positive tone and the community is perceiving it as such. A specific population of less than ten percent could be identified as dissenting and this percent is judged by the evaluative consultants as low.

20. School should be commended for its overwhelming progress towards student holding power. The reduction of dropouts from relatively high percent in previous years to virtually non-existent this year is outstanding.

Progress From Evaluation

The evaluation of Prince of Wales High School and George Hamilton Elementary resulted in the following changes, improvements and refinements for the next year.

The overwhelming support given the mini course system resulted in it's continued use. As teachers became more familiar with the system the classes became better organized and more attractive. In defining the mini courses to a much greater degree the school has adapted behavior objectives as the course descriptions for each class. Behavioral objectives are leading to more individualization inside the mini courses as well as more concrete independent work, outside of structured classes.

Guidelines have been set up as far as registration is concerned and the student's progress is monitored much more closely through the use of a new advisor system. Students were asked to choose an adult with whom they would like to work for the coming year.

Guidelines have been established that require students to have objectives... that must be completed when on an exchange or a special studies project. Upon returning the student may do any one or all of the following

1. Present materials to interested elementary and high school students.
2. Write a report to be filed for future use by other students.
3. Teach a mini course related to the experience.

The elementary school's participation in the mini courses has increased greatly. In addition to high school teachers offering specific classes for kids (i.e. poetry, woodworking) elementary students are welcome in high school classes that they feel would benefit them. Right now they are taking part in an outdoor survival class and their participation in the high school on a limited basis helps the elementary staff determine who is ready to "graduate."

The mini-course participation is definitely a two way street as elementary staff people offer selected courses for high school students and there's a great deal of enthusiasm amoung high school students over a program where they are allowed to tutor at the elementary. The elementary staff also has the ball rolling on a program where poor high school readers tutor kids in the morning and work on their own reading skills in the afternoon for an hour while receiving mini-course credit.

The community's presence on the "staff has been steadily growing. More frequent and varied offerings are available to the kids as the skills and expertise of our local experts are put to use. A local artist who was

teaching occasional mini-courses now has an emergency certificate, attends staff sessions and teaches 1/2 days.

There have been three community meetings this year to solicit problems and solutions regarding the working of the school.

Several citizens are becoming proficient at writing behavioral objectives as they were included in the teacher in service, and our proposed objectives for graduation are screened continually by the town.

The pay schedule for teachers and administrators has been changed from a time and schooling base to a performance base. The community is invited to appear before the school board and give testimony, good or bad, on the teacher(s), administration and teacher-aides. The community is deeply involved in the school and will continue to be so.

Evaluation model: An evaluator was hired who is currently working on an evaluation model.

Male Elementary. The elementary school now has a male principal and a male teacher-aid, and some local males have had part time stints at the school. In addition, male secondary teachers offer some classes for elementary students.

A planning commission has been organized by the city to plan for a better quality of life in the Craig area. This will involve the school and the town shortly.

CRAIG CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

UNDERSTANDING OF SELF IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS.

Goals:

A. Each learner will become, according to his needs, a self directed independent learner.

B. Learners will be made aware that they are an integral part of society and can adapt into the society in which they choose to live.

C. Learners will be aware that every living person is an individual and a human being who is worthy of his respect simply because he exists.

D. Learners will be aware of and respect the values, traditions and lifestyles of persons from cultures or subcultures different from their own.

E. Learners will develop a sensitivity to the world around them through creative and unique experiences which stimulate all their senses.

EVERY PERSON IS AN INDIVIDUAL AND SHOULD BE TREATED AS SUCH.

A. The student should be evaluated on what he knows, feels, and can do rather than on how much time he spends in school.

B. Structured learning activities will be individualized to insure successful learning experiences.

C. Learners will be included in determining each individuals program.

D. The curriculum will be flexible and progress will be continuous and based on individual needs.

E. The school will provide an environment that will help the student in the fulfillment of self selected goals that bear directly on his future livelihood and happiness.

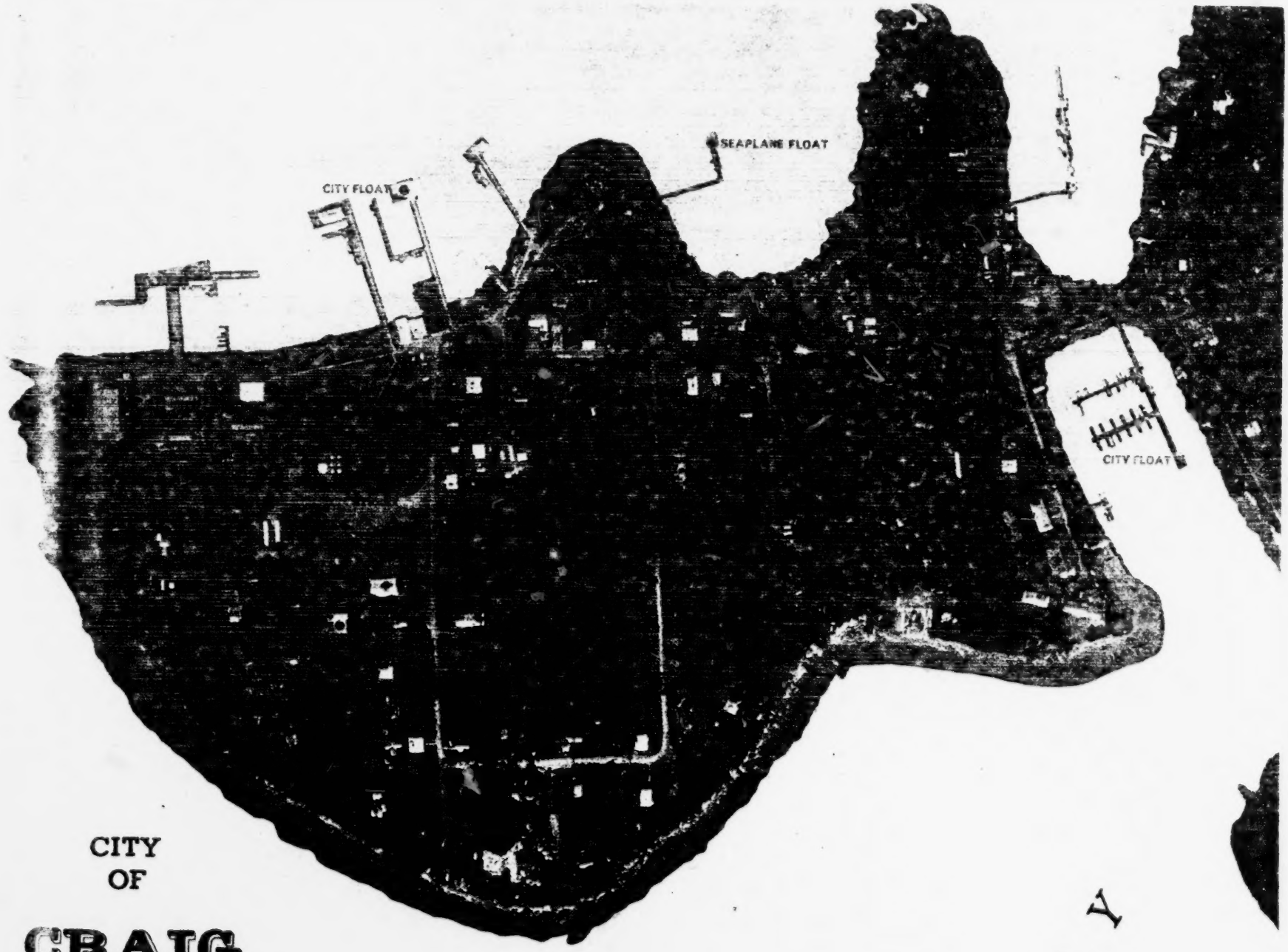
THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IS LIFE ITSELF AND THE SCHOOL IS ONLY ONE OF MANY RESOURCES TO THIS.

A. Every learner will have a significant person whom he can relate to.

B. The learner will respect and appreciate the presence of every living thing animate or inanimate as an integral part of life.

C. All structured learning that takes place must have a purpose that the learner can identify with.

D. The community as a whole will be a functional part of the school.



CITY
OF

CRAIG
ALASKA

POPULATION 272